

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Contra Costa County CalWORKs¹ Plan document is a compilation of all the plans completed to date, in progress or anticipated at this time to implement the CalWORKs program in Contra Costa County. The Plan is required by state legislation enacted in August, 1997, and speaks to all the elements mandated by that legislation.

Required Plan elements are:

- (a) Collaboration with other public and private agencies for training and support services;
- (b) Partnerships with the private sector to identify jobs;
- (c) Local labor market needs;
- (d) Welfare-to-Work activities;
- (e) Substance abuse and mental health treatment services;
- (f) Mental health services available after time limits;
- (g) Child care and transportation services;
- (h) Community service plan;
- (i) Working with victims of domestic violence;
- (j) Performance outcomes to meet locally established objectives;
- (k) Public input to the County Plan;
- (l) Source and expenditures of funds;
- (m) Assisting families transitioning off aid;
- (n) Job creation;
- (o) Other elements;
- (p) Compliance with requirements of CalWORKs;
- (q) Interaction with American Indian Tribes;
- Certification.

In addition, the Contra Costa CalWORKs Plan represents an outline, with a number of supporting attachments, of the ongoing efforts of many local groups, organizations, departments and agencies to address welfare reform as part of the construction of a *system* of workforce and economic development, job creation and supportive services to benefit all Contra Costa job-seekers, workers and their families. This Contra Costa County CalWORKs plan documents:

- Activities that have formed the basis for building the new service system;
- Current efforts to implement initiatives; and
- Future plans seen as essential to focus on bringing together the resources and expertise of many agencies, groups and organizations for the purpose of expanding capacity to serve job-seekers, workers, employers and, ultimately, all citizens in Contra Costa County and the Bay Area region.

As of September, 1997, there were approximately 13,500 open AFDC cases² with over 26,000 children and about 12,000 adults participating in the AFDC program. It is expected that approximately 8,100 adults currently participating in AFDC will be required to participate in CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work Services program. The county Social Service Department intends to begin enrolling new applicants into the WTW Services program in March, 1998 and to begin phasing in current participants in April, 1998, with all nonexempt participants scheduled to be enrolled, as required by state law, by January 1, 1999.

¹California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids. See Section XX for a list of abbreviations/acronyms.

²This figure represents AFDC Family Group and AFDC Unemployed Parent programs and does not include AFDC Foster Care cases. Source: CA 237 FG/U report for 9/97.

The SSD has developed a new service delivery model which includes all the elements of the Welfare-to-Work Services program required by state law: orientation, appraisal, job readiness services, assessment, welfare-to-work plans, work activities (including mental health, substance abuse and domestic violence services), community service and supportive services such as child care and transportation. Other elements of the CalWORKs program which are required by state law and which will be offered by the county include lump-sum diversion payments and employment retention services.

Other agencies and departments have been, or will be, allocated federal and/or state funding for employment-related programs and supportive services for CalWORKs participants. Such departments/agencies include:

- Contra Costa County and City of Richmond Private Industry Councils;
- Los Medanos, Contra Costa and Diablo Valley Community Colleges;
- Adult Education and Regional Occupational Center/Programs;
- East, West and Central County offices of the State Employment Development Department;
- Local child care Alternative Payment Program Providers.

In addition, there are other organizations and agencies serving low-income families with programs for which CalWORKs participants may qualify. These programs include vocational rehabilitation programs, housing authority programs and other programs offered by public, non-profit and private organizations. The County CalWORKs plan outlines ways in which these programs and services will be aligned with the SSD service delivery model to ensure CalWORKs participants can access all the appropriate employment programs and supportive services offered in the county.

The County CalWORKs Plan serves as a “progress report” of all the activity that has brought the county to the threshold of substantive change in public service programs, but is by no means a final product for implementation and beyond. Many of the planning activities for CalWORKs system development will continue in the coming months as initial program implementation occurs. Moreover, it is expected that laws and requirements will evolve continuously over the next few years as more experience and information about the new programs and services become known. Community involvements and cross-agency collaborations which are in the early stages are expected to develop and grow over time. Change of this magnitude requires continued commitment and creativity, responsiveness and flexibility on the part of all system partners.

INTRODUCTION: CalWORKs GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In 1994, federal legislation³ fundamentally altered the welfare system with the passage of legislation which eliminated the AFDC and GAIN programs in favor of block grants to states to design and implement their own public assistance programs. This legislation also required that states meet certain measures of work participation for participants receiving block grant funding and implemented lifetime limits of 5 years on aid for most adults. This federal legislation was conceived in part as a deficit reduction measure which was expected to reduce federal spending for many social programs by an estimated \$50-60 billion over the seven-year life of the law. In 1997, some of the SSI program cuts were restored, reducing some of the impact of this loss of federal funding, but the overall loss of funding remains significant.

In 1997, the California legislature passed, and the Governor signed, legislation creating the CalWORKs program to replace AFDC and GAIN. CalWORKs legislation implements the federal welfare reform requirements and legislates many of the state options allowed by federal law. It now falls to counties to operationalize and implement new programs and services to serve low-income families. These new programs and services are focused on employment as the primary service to most families. Each county is required to design, within state and federal parameters, programs and services to assist low-income job-seekers to become, and stay, employed.

CalWORKs legislation crosses traditional local and state agency organizational lines and moves counties toward collaborative efforts and initiatives involving many county departments and organizations, direct participation by state and federal agencies and involvement of community groups, consumers of services, faith- and community-based organizations and the private sector, including the employer community, in program design and implementation.

Contra Costa County staff began planning for welfare reform prior to the passage of federal or state legislation. It became clear in the early planning stages that no single agency or department could achieve the goals of increased employment and decreased dependency on public aid. Moreover, it became apparent that a broad vision and comprehensive, systemic change was necessary to address local concerns for potential adverse impacts for families and children, the child welfare system and decreased funding under block grants.

Contra Costa County's evolution toward a comprehensive, integrated, seamless system of public service delivery in the areas of welfare-to-work, workforce development, economic development, job creation and supportive services (including infrastructure) thus predates state and federal welfare reform legislation. Welfare reform is viewed at the local level as both a cause and an effect, a catalyst for surfacing and integrating activities in different sectors of the county's workforce preparation efforts.

³Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Public Law 104-193.

CalWORKs Program Goals and Objectives

The CalWORKs program, as part of the county's overall workforce development efforts, has adopted goals and objectives which are designed to link back to the overall Social Service Department Mission:

Social Service Department Mission

In partnership with the community, provide services which support and protect families, individuals and children in need, and promote personal responsibility, independence and self-sufficiency.

In 1996 the Social Service Department, through an extensive and participatory internal planning process, developed a plan to redesign the IM and GAIN⁴ services to become an employment-focused service delivery system. The goals and values of the Social Service IM/GAIN Redesign Plan, "Focusing on Employment," which is in Phase II of implementation, have been adopted as modified below as the county's CalWORKs goals and values:

CalWORKs Goals

In partnership with other departments, agencies and the community, to contribute to the reduction of poverty and the promotion of well-being in Contra Costa County by:

- *moving families from welfare to work;*
- *increasing earned incomes;*
- *providing supportive services (such as child care, cash aid, access to nutritional and health assistance) and increasing access to other services and resources to those in need as they work toward economic self-sufficiency;*
- *increasing service efficiency and job-seeker, employer and staff satisfaction.*

CalWORKs Values

- *All individuals possess strengths, skills and abilities that provide the foundation for self-sufficiency. The most effective services are those tailored to the individual needs of a diverse participant population.*
- *Employment is the critical means of increasing self-esteem, health, economic independence and self-sufficiency.*
- *Education and training, in tandem with employment and related activities, are important components of self-sufficiency efforts.*
- *Mutual obligations and clear expectations between participants and the agency are the best means to promote self-reliance.*
- *Commitment to working to streamline program rules and regulations is essential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.*
- *The efficacy of our efforts is contingent upon our capacity to work in partnership with each other, other divisions, other departments, other agencies and with the community.*
- *Children are our county's most valuable resource. By supporting families in their self-sufficiency efforts, we help to build the next generation of healthy and economically independent adults.*

In addition to the county's CalWORKs goals and values, a number of specific implementation objectives for calendar year 1998 have been formulated, based on state and federal mandates for employment services and participation in work activities as well as on local input and planning for workforce development. These objectives are:

⁴"Income Maintenance" is the former name of the Division that administered the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program. AFDC was eliminated by federal law in 1996. "Greater Avenues for Independence," the state's employment services component for AFDC, was also eliminated. CalWORKs, which includes Welfare-to-Work Services, was established in state law effective 1/1/98 to replace these programs in California.

1998 CalWORKs Implementation Objectives

- i. *Develop and implement employment-focused, integrated welfare-to-work services program in the Social Service Department and link with existing or planned welfare-to-work activities in the county, including but not limited to: One-Stop Career Centers; EDD Job Services; Community Colleges education and training services; Housing Authority and other community work programs; Private Industry Council welfare-to-work services for CalWORKs participants; Adult Education and ROC/P program services; other community-based employment services programs; services to non-custodial parents; employment retention services; life-long learning opportunities.*
- ii. *Enroll all mandatory CalWORKs participants in welfare-to-work services by 1/1/99.*
- iii. *Achieve at least 2,500 employment placements, with at least 30% of those representing families leaving the CalWORKs cash aid rolls due to employment.*
- iv. *Expand existing activities to develop supportive services that assist families in their economic self-sufficiency efforts. Specifically, work to increase access to, capacity and quality of child care and transportation services.*
- v. *Work to achieve the requirements of the federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996.*
- vi. *Implement a diversion program that allows families to access community resources and, as appropriate, access lump-sum payments to avoid dependence on public social services.*
- vii. *Implement an employment retention function that allows families to sustain and build their economic independence.*
- viii. *Train staff in employment-focused service delivery and continue and expand efforts to reduce redundant, duplicative and overly complex paperwork, rules and practices in favor of streamlined, cost-effective and outcome-based services.*
- ix. *Build in activities that reduce dependency on, or avoid the potential for negative impact on, child welfare services.*
- x. *Adopt the IM/GAIN Redesign Outcomes (as modified in the County Plan process) as the basis for CalWORKs outcomes⁵. Establish other outcomes as appropriate that measure progress in achieving goals and objectives as stated for the CalWORKs program or identified locally. Establish specific targets, based on these measures, in each area of the county for achieving stated outcomes. Participate in the development of methods and mechanisms, systemwide, for collecting data, measuring outcomes and analyzing progress.*
- xi. *Participate in activities that create jobs and promote economic development in the county.*
- xii. *Commit to long-term, comprehensive, integrated, county-wide efforts that assist families in becoming and remaining economically independent.*
- xiii. *Use and expand existing groups, internal and county-wide, wherever possible to develop and expand linkages, partnerships and integrated services.*
- xiv. *Participate in the development of a legislative platform that reflects the priorities of the county with regard to welfare-to-work, integrated services and family strength activities.*

⁵See Section X (j) for a listing of these outcomes and measures

The major program elements that support the achievement of these goals and objectives include:

- A redesigned service delivery model⁶ for CalWORKs welfare-to-work services participants. This model emphasizes employment and job readiness, with cash aid delivered as one of many possible supportive services. Other supportive services include child care, transportation, ancillary payments, mental health, substance abuse and domestic violence services, links to community resources, employment retention and other services. Participants will be better able to access, as appropriate, services offered in other systems such as One-Stop Career Centers, Community Colleges, Adult Education and ROC/P, JTPA and other services that, together with employment, will further their self-sufficiency goals.
- Continued participation in county-wide efforts to build a comprehensive system of workforce preparation, economic and workforce development and job creation in the county and the region. Some of these efforts include participation on or linkages with: the Workforce Development Advisory Panel; Private Industry Council Boards and work groups; Children's Policy Forum (including the Transportation Subcommittee); local Chambers of Commerce; East Bay Works⁷; Food and Nutrition Policy Consortium; East Bay Refugee Forum; Local Planning Council for Child Care and Development; faith- and community-based organizations which offer services or input on welfare reform issues; and many others.
- Continued support of the county's Service Integration program. This program was authorized in 1994 as a demonstration pursuant to state legislation (AB 1741). Sites in Bay Point and North Richmond were established to test alternative approaches to moving families out of poverty. The Service Integration program targets communities with the highest concentrations of low-income, high-risk families with multiple service needs by offering services through neighborhood-based Family Service Centers staffed by the Social Service (Eligibility and GAIN), Juvenile Probation and Health Services Departments. Services are focused on the whole family and are based on family strengths. Service Integration both complements and enhances the county's welfare reform efforts in the following ways:
 - Service Integration has pioneered and continues the development of new service delivery processes and models as well as alternative organizational structures for serving Contra Costa families. Examples include: development of self-sufficiency workshops; emphasis on employment in all staff/participant contacts; collaboration across programs, departments and community-based organizations; training staff in team-building and organizational culture change; emphasis on outcomes over process and tracking of key outcome measures; strengths-based assessments and interventions; introduction of case management across functions; community involvement; fuller involvement of program participants in developing and carrying out services; procurement of a state and federal waiver to increase efficiency and effectiveness of services;

⁶See Section IV (d) for a more detailed outline of the service delivery model

⁷A regional workforce development alliance among the two Social Service Departments and four Private Industry Councils in Contra Costa and Alameda Counties, local Employment Development Department offices and other partners.

- Service Integration targets those families served by multiple county programs to fill a specific set of needs not common to the majority of CalWORKs participants, including cash aid, employment services, child welfare, mental health, probation, public health and school-based programs; and
 - Service Integration develops and carries out projects that offer valuable lessons in achieving the broader set of goals in the overall county welfare reform model. For example, the recent expansion of bus service in North Richmond⁸ was the product of a Service Integration and Partners in Health collaboration with AC Transit to improve community infrastructure. This project is one of many that assists SSD and other agency staff in planning and carrying out similar improvements county-wide.
- Active participation in County Welfare Directors Association and County Supervisors Association projects that shape the evolution of public social service delivery at the regional and state level, including legislative advocacy efforts.
- Expansion of the current efforts to collect and analyze data for the purpose of measuring progress toward established goals and making course corrections as necessary as the countywide system takes shape. Work will also continue to build existing capacity to share appropriate information across service provider systems and to put in place automated systems that meet the requirements of the welfare reform environment.
- Participation in other activities, as the CalWORKs program is implemented, which further the goals and objectives of the program and the local goals of helping to reduce poverty in the county, increasing the incomes of county residents, creating jobs and better serving the employer community, and helping strengthen families by providing services that lead toward economic self-sufficiency.

⁸See Section VII, (g) “Child Care and Transportation Services” for more information.

Section I

(a) COLLABORATION WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE AGENCIES TO PROVIDE TRAINING AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES⁹

The current collaborative efforts among Social Service Department and other agencies to provide training and supportive services will continue, and are expected to expand, as the CalWORKs program is implemented. The SSD CalWORKs service delivery model¹⁰ includes the Welfare-to-Work Services elements of orientation, appraisal, job search/job readiness, assessment, welfare-to-work plans, work activities, supportive services and community service as required by state law. Training and employment-related activities include job readiness services ("job club"/job search programs), job development and participant job-networking, ESL, ABE and GED courses, short-term vocational educational training and community college programs. Supportive services include payments for child care, transportation and ancillary costs, employment retention services and employment-related mental health, substance abuse and domestic violence services.

Training and employment-related activities and supportive services will be provided by Social Service Department staff as well as many other agencies and organizations. Major components of these services include:

Training and Employment-Related Activities

- The Social Service Department offers job readiness services, including "job club" employment preparation classes (interviewing and resume development), job search assistance, job development (through contract with Private Industry Councils), assessment and ongoing case management throughout participation in work activities. These services will be expanded under CalWORKs, both in scope and to include employment retention services.
- The county's three Community Colleges (Contra Costa College, Diablo Valley College and Los Medanos College), which already serve public assistance participants, have been allocated expanded funding to provide training, education and supportive services for CalWORKs participants. Each college has submitted an application for this CalWORKs funding to the state Office of Community Colleges. These applications have been reviewed and approved by the county Social Service Department Director. More extensive plans, including proposed curriculum, were drafted in mid-November¹¹.
- The county's Adult Education and Regional Occupational Centers/Program have also been allocated additional funding for the purpose of expanding services for CalWORKs participants, and are working on plans for provision of services as partners in the formulation of the county's Instructional and Job Training Plan. These services will be incorporated into the overall service delivery options for CalWORKs WTW Services participants. Current programs available through the AdEd & ROC/Ps include short-term vocational training (including job readiness and job search support), Adult Basic

⁹ State DSS outline suggests: "Briefly describe how the county will work with other public and private agencies to provide necessary training and support services. This section should include, at a minimum, a list of the necessary training and support services and the public and/or private agencies which will provide those services. [References: Education Code Section 10200 and WIC Section 10531(a)]".

¹⁰ See Section IV, (d) "Welfare-to-Work Activities", for a more detailed outline of the CalWORKs service delivery model.

¹¹ See Attachment B for a list of current certificate and degree programs offered by the 3 local Community Colleges and copies of the Colleges Plans for changes for CalWORKs participants.

Education, High School Diploma, General Equivalency Degree, English as a Second Language, Refugee Employment Services, Parent Education, Citizenship Preparation and others¹².

- The county's two JTPA Service Delivery Areas, the Contra Costa County Private Industry Council¹³ and City of Richmond Private Industry Council¹⁴, receive JTPA funding for services to CalWORKs participants who meet JTPA criteria. In addition, funding from the federal Balanced Budget Act of 1997 provides for \$3 billion nationwide in Welfare-to-Work funds for expansion of services to CalWORKs participants and non-custodial parents of CalWORKs children. This additional funding is expected to be received early in 1998 and plans for services are being developed.

A host of public agencies and other partners are participating in the development of 8-10 One-Stop Career Centers¹⁵ in the county. These Centers are expected to open in early 1998 and will be staffed by PIC, EDD, SSD, AdEd, non-profit and other staff to offer a range of employment services to the general public, including services to the employer community.

- The county's three local State Employment Development Department (EDD) offices offer, both independently and in some cases, on-site at local Social Service offices, work registration and job placement services through their Job Services database.
- By March 31, 1998, the county Superintendent of Schools, the local community colleges, the local school districts that provide adult education and the directors of other job training programs in the county must develop a Plan that provides for instructional and job training services for the county's CalWORKs participants. The plan must be approved by the County Welfare Director. It is expected that these partners will be meeting over the coming months to develop and implement the Plan, which will be incorporated into the overall training and education service delivery options for CalWORKs participants.
- The county actively participates in local and regional surveys and analyses¹⁶ designed to better equip local agencies to design employment, education, training and support services.
- The Social Service Department contracts with non-profit agencies for programs such as Cal-Learn, refugee and citizenship services and certain employment services and with Contra Costa PIC for job development staff. In state fiscal year (SFY) 96-7, the Social Service Department contracted with several agencies, public and non-profit (Contra Costa College, Rubicon, Contra Costa PIC, Goodwill, Neighborhood House of North Richmond, and local ROC/Ps), for certain employment services.

¹²See Attachment C for a list of the county Adult Education and ROC/Ps and their programs.

¹³See Attachment D for an occupational training matrix produced by Contra Costa County PIC; this list can be cross-referenced with certified PIC vendors for a listing of PIC-funded training programs.

¹⁴See Attachment E for a list of training and services provided through Richmond Works.

¹⁵See Section II, (b) "Partnerships with the Private Sector to Identify Jobs", for more information.

¹⁶See Attachment F for: 1) an analysis of education and training levels for projected employment in Contra Costa County; and 2) Executive Summary of a 1997 nine-county survey on job readiness.

- The county District Attorney Family Support Division, Social Service Department, PICs and have applied, as collaborative partners, for state funding to implement the Contra Costa County Non-Custodial Parent Employment and Training Demonstration Project in 1998. This project is designed to increase the incomes of CalWORKs participants by:
 - providing employment services to non-custodial parents that improve their ability to pay child support; and
 - offering services designed to reduce other system costs and improve the quality of the relationships among non-custodial parents, their children, and custodial parents through parenting, counseling and mediation activities.

☒ The Social Service Department certifies that it will coordinate CalWORKs WTW activities with its Refugee Employment Services Plan. Staff in both the CalWORKs WTW Services and Refugee Services programs will receive training to provide services and referrals to existing programs serving refugees as appropriate. Staff will be regularly notified about refugee employment services and supportive services.

Support Services

- **Child Care¹⁷**--Child care services have been redesigned by the state Department of Education, which is the lead agency for the federal Child Care Development Block Grant¹⁸, into a three-stage system to serve eligible low-income families needing child care. The DOE has entered into agreements with the state Department of Social Services and recent state welfare reform law outlines requirements for administration of child care funds.

State Department of Social Services receives funds for “Stage 1” child care, which is intended to serve CalWORKs participants with unstable work/work activity arrangements. These funds will be administered locally by the county Social Service Department. “Stage 2” child care, intended for low-income participants who are working or in training while receiving CalWORKs benefits, or transitioning off aid, will be administered locally by current local Alternative Payment Providers (APPs¹⁹). “Stage 3” child care, intended for those qualifying low-income families (including former CalWORKs participants) who need subsidized child care, will be administered locally by the SSD, Child Care Council and the PACE program.

Local APPs will collaborate to ensure that CalWORKs participants can easily access information and referral to licensed child care providers. All APPs will also develop procedures to connect to other child care system resources for CalWORKs participants such as local Community Colleges funding, Community Services/Head Start programs, and local K-12 school-based programs.

- **Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services**--Social Service and Health Service staff are currently meeting to develop services for CalWORKs WTW Services participants, to provide identification, assessment, treatment plans and case management for those participants needing services as part of their employability plans.

¹⁷ See Section VII, (g) "Child Care and Transportation", for more information.

¹⁸ Child care funds for the former AFDC child care disregard, Supplemental Child Care, GAIN child care and Transitional Child Care programs have been transferred to this block grant.

¹⁹ Current local APPs are the Child Care Council, the Social Service Department and the PACE program

- **Transportation**--CalWORKs WTW Services participants will receive payments for necessary transportation costs. Social Service staff are also working in a number of forums to identify transportation needs and develop strategies to increase access to, and capacity of, local transit infrastructure.
- **Ancillary Payments**--Funding will continue to be provided for reasonable and necessary employment-related costs for CalWORKs participants, including but not limited to such items as union dues, uniforms, tools, etc.
- **Employment Retention Services**--Case management and supportive services will be available to employed CalWORKs participants for up to six months the first time and up to three months for each subsequent time an employed participant goes off aid to assist them in keeping jobs as well as direction to resources to improve their earning capacity.
- **To the extent funding is available;** Contra Costa County will provide specialized support services to its participants. These programs include
 - **Housing Assistance**-- Assistance in obtaining and maintaining permanent housing will be available to participants in the Welfare-to-Work Program to provide a stable environment to enhance employment. Housing programs include
 - Housing information and referral
 - Tenant Housing Counseling
 - Housing Assistance to maintain housing. Payments would be made at 80% of housing costs for a maximum of four months; during that time, participants would be required to put the same amount into an escrow or individual development account, and
 - One-time only payments to assist with housing and related costs in the form of Housing Relocation assistance, Transitional Support, and Emergency Assistance.
 Participants needing to access any of these programs must first use CalWORKs Special Needs payments for housing or other related costs.
 - **Transportation Programs** -- Special transportation programs are available to transport participants when public transportation isn't available or to address long-term transportation needs. These programs include
 - 'Rides to Success - This program provides door-to-door bus service to transport participants from their homes to Welfare to Work activities.
 - 'Children's Transportation Project - This program provides transportation for children to and from school when public transportation isn't available or safe for children to ride alone.
 - 'KEYS Auto Loan Program - This program is available by application and with approval by the loan committee to individuals who have been employed for at least three months and need an automobile for work.

Section II

(b) PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO IDENTIFY JOBS²⁰

Contra Costa County has built and continues to sustain strong partnerships with the private sector through the GAIN program and through partnership with the two county Private Industry Councils, Contra Costa County PIC and City of Richmond PIC. These partnerships have led to placement of many welfare clients in the past. Both GAIN job development and the job development efforts of the PICs have extended services to both large and small hiring firms throughout our county.

The work of the Contra Costa County and the Richmond PICs successfully join private sector, education, labor, social services, government and community based organizations in a partnership to identify employment and training needs and to address those needs both locally and regionally. They have years of experience in designing successful avenues for job development leading to placement and retention for the unemployed and underemployed in this county.

PICs have long been members of local Chambers of Commerce, the Contra Costa Council and the Contra Costa Economic Partnership. Members of the PIC Board include a majority of private businesses as well as a member of the Central Labor Council. In addition, the California Employment Development Department (EDD) offices have historically provided a labor exchange with centralized job listings of local employers and a job match system for connecting job seekers to those jobs.

A committee of the County PIC is planning to convene a business focus group to engage local business in welfare-to-work initiatives. The goal of this committee is to engage business in both hiring CalWORKs job-seekers and in developing long-term training opportunities for CalWORKs participants.

With the advent of the One Stop Career Centers, Contra Costa County's job-seekers will benefit from a regional infrastructure serving the entire East Bay. The Private Industry Councils of Alameda County, Contra Costa County, City of Richmond and City of Oakland have partnered with the state Employment Development Department, Alameda and Contra Costa Social Services Departments and representatives of the education community from both counties to develop a comprehensive system of One-Stop Career Centers, known as EastBay Works. Utilizing Job Training partnership Act (JTPA) funds, the PICs are currently putting in place the California Vision for Workforce Development as designed at the state level.

EastBay Works electronically links workforce activities at 16+ sites in the Alameda-Contra Costa County service areas, allowing for immediate exchange of information and resources to serve area job-seekers and employers. Additional communication capabilities allow access to the Internet from each site and link the EastBay Works system to local, regional and statewide resources. These centers also serve employer needs, such as supplying a ready workforce. Marketing of these services is rolling out in early 1998, including a toll-free number for a single point of contact with employers, as well as a "Web" site which is accessible to employers.

One Stop Career Center locations slated to open by March, 1998, throughout Contra Costa County include:

²⁰State DSS outline suggests: "Describe the county's partnerships with the private sector, including employers, employer associations, the faith community, and central labor councils, and how those partnerships will identify jobs for CalWORKs program recipients. [Reference: WIC Section 10531(b)]."

Antioch	Concord (2)	Richmond (2)
Brentwood	Tri-Valley (Dublin)	Pinole
Pittsburg	San Pablo	

Partners providing comprehensive services in the centers include:

EAST COUNTY:

- Adult Education (Antioch, Liberty, Pittsburg)
- Cities (Antioch, Brentwood, Pittsburg)
- County Office of Education
- Employment Development Department
- Los Medanos Community College
- St. Vincent DePaul
- Social Service Department
- United Council of Spanish-Speaking Organizations (UCSSO)
- Worldwide Educational Organization

CENTRAL COUNTY:

- Adult Education (Martinez, Mt. Diablo)
- County Office of Education
- Employment Development Department
- Goodwill
- John F. Kennedy University
- Mt. Diablo Vocational Services
- Rubicon
- St. Vincent de Paul
- Social Service Department
- Worldwide Education Organization

WEST COUNTY:

- Adult education (West County)
- Contra Costa College
- County Office of Education
- Employment Development Department
- Rubicon
- Social Service Department
- Worldwide Education Organization

The Job Development arm of the One Stop system is an integrated team of job developers, marketed as the Employer Connection. Staffing is provided through rotation from over 22 agencies working together. Using the Internet, job orders are listed on Work-Web, a comprehensive site that is also part of the EastBay Works One Stop system and are simultaneously listed on America's Job Bank. This innovative approach affords maximum visibility for any of our clients seeking employment. The Employer Connection has just won an award from Vice President Gore for Innovative Use of Technology in Government. Employer Connection services is now available to all job seekers in Contra Costa County.

Collaboration between the local PICs and the Social Service Department's CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work Services initiatives is anticipated to lead to enhanced capacity with minimal duplication of services, moving us far ahead in offering an efficient and effective system for supporting self-sufficiency and creating a strong foundation for a system of workforce development. SSD staff will co-locate with other system partners at local One Stop sites. It is anticipated that SSD offices offering WTW Services will be restructured to mirror many of the services in the One Stop. Social Service Department staff in local SSD offices will coordinate with One Stop staff to ensure CalWORKs participants have access to the programs and services offered in both places. The resources developed through the One Stop will be available via Internet and will therefore assist all CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work Services participants no matter which physical site delivers their primary services.

Lastly, the county, through the formation of the Workforce Development Advisory Panel, has launched a new era of interaction and collaboration with the private sector. Members of the panel include representatives from the Central Labor Council, local Chambers of Commerce and the Contra Costa Economic partnership.

Section III

(c) LOCAL LABOR MARKET NEEDS²¹

Contra Costa County utilizes a variety of sources for identification of local labor market needs. These sources offer extensive information that assist local partners in developing methods for matching job-seekers with employers, determining training opportunities, job development and formulating long-term economic and workforce development strategies. CalWORKs participants are among those job-seekers who benefit from the available information, which can be used to focus on the particular strategies needed to assist low-income job-seekers in obtaining and maintaining employment.

The sources used for identification of local labor market needs include, but are not limited to:

- Contra Costa Economic Partnership, which produces employment-related analyses and provides a substantive link to the employer community;
- Employment Development Department Labor Market Information Division, which provides statewide, regional and county-specific labor market information;
- Contra Costa County and City of Richmond Private Industry Councils, which develop and produce products such as annual "Employment Outlook" surveys, analyses of labor market information and trends, extensive employer information, training/skill level analyses and information about local training providers;
- Central Labor Council, which offers local information about apprenticeships and labor needs;
- East Bay Works Internet Web Site, which has links to many state, regional and local employment-related sites as well as which serves as a repository for a host of labor market information;
- GAIN job developers, who gather local employment information;
- Local Chambers of Commerce, which offer linkage to the business community²² and timely information on market trends;

²¹ State DSS outline suggests: "Briefly describe other means the county will use to identify local labor market needs. [Reference: WIC Section 10531(c)]."

²² Social Service Department staff have recently been offered an opportunity to volunteer to join their local Chambers to provide a closer linkage among local businesses and local offices.

- Adult Education & ROC/Ps, which offer job development and placement information specific to their training and education programs.

The unemployment rate in Contra Costa County²³ is 4.2% as of September, 1997. This compares favorably with a statewide rate of 6.0% and a nationwide rate of 4.7% for the same period. For CalWORKs participants, however, the analyses of the available information are critical to developing employment programs that are specific to their needs. For example, a breakdown of the unemployment data by city²⁴ shows a higher rate in some areas with higher numbers of CalWORKs participants. The county's two Service Integration Program sites in Bay Point and North Richmond recently sought, and were awarded, a grant to launch Employment Initiatives targeted to the needs of the local communities they serve. This is just one example of the ways in which local labor market information can be used to design programs that meet the specific needs of CalWORKs participants.

Another example is the following table²⁵ of 10 occupations from a list of 40 of the occupations projected to have the most openings between 1994-2001 as they might relate to the availability of entry-level jobs for CalWORKs participants. While approximately 3,300 of the county's CalWORKs caseload currently report earnings, and many CalWORKs participants have job skills and experience, there are many others who lack experience in the labor force and will be obtaining their first jobs through the CalWORKs program. Thus, the availability of entry-level jobs is a critical element to the design of a self-sufficiency strategy that emphasizes employment, so that participants gain experience in that labor market and can concurrently or subsequently access training and education which, together with work experience, is expected to result in moving "up the ladder" to more lucrative employment.

Occupation	Job Openings	Wage Range	Median Range in Contra Costa	Job Growth	Education/ Skill Level
General Office Clerks	2,020	\$5.15-12.18/hr	\$9.79	12.8%	HSD
Waitresses/ Waiters	2,010	\$5.15-10/hr	\$6.75	19.8%	less than HSD
Janitors/Cleaners	1,510	\$5.15-8.63/hr	\$6.45	21.4%	less than HSD
Secretaries	1,350	\$6.71-\$13.15/hr	\$9.00	10.6%	HSD, software skills needed
Receptionists/ Info. Clerks	1,300	\$5.15-12.81/hr	\$8.00	21.3%	HSD
Instructional Aides	1,100	\$6.30-8.00/hr	\$7.00	13.3%	HSD
Guards/ Watch	970	\$5.50-9.00/hr	\$6.50	34.0%	HSD, training

²³This rate is derived from the "by city" rates maintained by EDD for Contra Costa County. EDD Labor Market Information Division does not calculate a separate rate for Contra Costa, but maintains a regional rate for Alameda/Contra Costa counties. The two-county rate is 4.5%.

²⁴See Attachment G for this a several other documents relating to labor market information.

²⁵Information is drawn from EDD Occupational Projections data dated June, 1997 and PIC Occupational Outlook Reports for 1994, 1995 and 1996.

Occupation	Job Openings	Wage Range	Median Range in Contra Costa	Job Growth	Education/ Skill Level
Guards					required
Maint. Repairers/ General Utility	890	\$7.00-14.53/hr	\$8.50	15.7%	HSD
Truck Drivers (light)	620	\$5.15-13.00/hr	\$7.00	15.0%	less than HSD, some training desired
Gardeners/ Groundskeepers	600	\$5.15-13.15/hr	\$7.25	22.4%	less than HSD

EDD's "Industry Trends and Outlook" reports that nonagricultural employment in Contra Costa County is expected to grow by 35,100 jobs from 1994-2001, a 12% gain. This includes full- and part-time positions. While all the industry divisions²⁶ will post increases, 2/3 of the jobs added will be in the services industries. Business services are responsible for 43%, or 9,800 of the new jobs in the services category. Almost 4,000 new jobs will be in the "amusements" category--health clubs, parks, and the motion picture industry. Health services industry, while at a slower rate, will continue to grow. Retail trade will post an increase of 4,400 jobs, about 25% of which are restaurant/bar jobs. (Construction is now expected to grow at a higher rate than the 1,001 new jobs originally forecast.)

Welfare reform efforts to focus on employment are coinciding with a favorable economic and business climate in the county. Whether the goals of welfare reform can be achieved in the event of an economic downturn is a much different question. To that end, it is necessary to immediately address the issues of job creation and economic development as extensively as possible at the local and regional level²⁷.

²⁶Services, retail trade, government, construction, manufacturing, transportation/public utilities, wholesale trade and finance/insurance/real estate.

²⁷See Section XIV, "Job Creation", for more information

(d) WELFARE-TO-WORK ACTIVITIES²⁸

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unsubsidized employment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Work study
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Subsidized private sector employment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Self-employment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Subsidized public sector employment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Community Service
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Work experience	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Job Search and job readiness assistance
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	On-the-job training	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Job skills training directly related to employment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Grant-based on-the-job training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supported work
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Vocational education and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transitional employment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Education directly related to employment		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Adult basic education (includes basic education, GED, and ESL.)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health, • Substance Abuse, • Domestic Violence services, • Cal-Learn • Refugee Employment Services • Study Hours in all education programs (two hours of study time per one hour of lecture) as permitted under State and Federal law, • Family Programs intended to strengthen the entire family as well as prepare the parent for work, including but not limited to anger management, parenting classes, and counseling 		

z

Some of the activities checked above are offered by Social Service staff, some by other county departments, agencies or community-based programs. The county Social Service Department does not currently offer grant-based on-the-job training, supported work, or transitional employment. These activities may be offered in the future as these options are more fully explored, potential costs and benefits are analyzed and experience with the new CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work Services program evolves.

Contra Costa's CalWORKs Service Delivery Model

A new Social Service Department CalWORKs service delivery model²⁹ has been proposed. This model was developed based on input from the AFDC and GAIN program committees, the IM/GAIN Redesign Program Design Task Force, local office Redesign Action Team Coordinators, meetings with other agencies and community groups, input from public

²⁸State DSS outline suggests: "Each county is expected to offer a range of services adequate to ensure that each participant has access to needed activities and services to assist him or her in seeking unsubsidized employment. [Reference: WIC Section 11322.7(a)] Pursuant to WIC Section 11322.7(b) 'No plan shall require job search and work experience of participants to the exclusion of a range of activities to be offered to recipients.' Activities allowed by state law include, but are not limited to, those listed below. Please indicate which of the following activities will be provided and identify any allowable activities that will not be provided [Reference: WIC Section 10531(d) and WIC Section 11322.6]."

²⁹See Attachment H.

forums, other counties' models and based in part on lessons learned from Redesign Pilot Projects that have been running in 4 local SSD offices since July, 1997.

The principles used in formulating the model include:

- Focus of the model is on employment; eligibility is a supportive service. This means that, in this model, there is still a "traditional" eligibility function for CalWORKs and other programs in which there is no work requirement.
- Model follows the state-mandated continuum of employment services and is based on most effective work flow for optimum participant service and benefit.
- The model moves the agency in a direction of a "Work/Not Work" division of function. The movement would be toward organizing job duties around work requirements rather than separate programs.
- Current definition of the "Intake" function is the AFDC eligibility determination process; current definition of the "Continuing" function is cases that have been granted AFDC cash aid. In the new model, the definitions of "Intake/Continuing" relate to employment services rather than to cash aid:
 - Pre-Assessment Intake
 - Post-Assessment Continuing

This means the "Intake" process includes orientation, appraisal, job club/job search and necessary support services (about the first 4-6 weeks of WTW Services); the "Continuing" process includes work activities, community service, safety net and supportive services. Assessment marks the transition from one set of services to the other.

- Employment services shall include employment retention services which may be provided by Medi-Cal staff, who are trained for this function, for those participants transitioning off CalWORKs. Other staff may also provide employment retention services. Receipt of employment retention services shall not be dependent on Medi-Cal eligibility.
- The model does not dictate staffing assignments. The goals are staff expertise in all phases of service delivery and as few primary contacts for the participant as possible.

Two SSD task groups have formed to facilitate the evolution of this model to a working practice: a Personnel task group and a task group to deal with the many details of operationalizing the model. Staff from all affected levels and functions will be represented on these groups. The Personnel task group will include representatives from the local bargaining units which represent staff. A third group that will be working to prepare staff for the implementation of the new service model is the Staff Development Task Force, a Redesign body that will develop training strategies for staff.

Most of the new rules for CalWORKs eligibility and budgeting begin on January 1, 1998. The Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN) program regulations effective in the county on December 31, 1997 shall remain in effect until Welfare-to-Work Services requirements become operative in the county. Target start date for enrollment of new applicants in CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work Services is March, 1998; ongoing CalWORKs participants are slated to be phased in to the WTW Services program beginning in April, 1998. It is the intention of the SSD to enroll all mandatory CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work Services participants into this program by 1/1/99, as required by state law.

The new CalWORKs service delivery model features an expanded Orientation for CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work Services participants, with information about the new program, child care services (including phone sites for

families to access referrals for child care), time limits and work requirements, rights and responsibilities, health care options, work activities (including mental health, substance abuse and domestic violence services as part of employability plans), child support services, CalWORKs income and budgeting rules and other information. Appraisal and, as appropriate, assignment to job readiness, job search or assessment follow unless the participant is deferred or exempt. Job-seekers work closely with the Employment Services case manager during this phase of the model.

Participants who obtain employment will be offered employment retention services (case management, services and supportive services) for up to six months the first time and up to three months each subsequent time if transitioning off aid or working the minimum number of hours. Participants who are unemployed or under-employed will engage in a comprehensive assessment of job skills and supportive service needs, sign a Welfare-to-Work plan and engage in work activities designed to lead to employment. Participants with lesser supportive services needs, including those in Self-Initiated Programs, will work closely with an Employment Services case manager.

Those with more significant supportive services needs will be offered more intensive case management and supportive services. Criteria will include, but not be limited to: coordination with child welfare services for participants being served both by WTW and Child Welfare Services, mental health services needs and domestic violence services needs. (**Note:** the need for mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence³⁰ and other services may be identified at any point in the WTW Services continuum. Once identified, services will be offered as part of the participant's employability plan.) All participants lacking basic literacy or adequate language skills (where education is appropriate and necessary for removal of barriers to employment) will be assigned to ABE or ESL classes, concurrently with other work activities as appropriate.

CalWORKs participants who complete the work activities outlined in their WTW Plan without achieving employment will participate in a reappraisal and reassignment to work activities as appropriate. Safety net benefits will be provided for the children of participants who exceed the 60-month limit.

The Social Service Department will expand its current collaboration with a variety of agencies and organizations in providing these employment, training and educational opportunities to CalWORKs participants. This model is designed to more fully integrate the IM/GAIN division into the CalWORKs/Welfare-to-Work Services Division. Over time it is expected that staff and services will be reorganized according to whether the participant/program has a work requirement rather than services organized separately, by program. This evolution will provide for the continued development of case manager expertise and program focus on employment.

The county intends to adopt the GAIN program grievance procedures, as outlined in the GAIN Plan dated February, 1987 and as modified in the 1994/95 GAIN Plan, as the CalWORKs grievance procedure to meet the requirements of AB 1542, Section 121, 11327.8.

The county intends to continue the Cal-Learn program as outlined in state law and continue to provide support for teen parents working to complete their secondary school programs.

³⁰ Note: With some exceptions, any CalWORKs program requirement can be waived, relating to employability, for past or present victims of domestic violence.

Other CalWORKs Program Elements

Diversion--County staff have been working to design criteria for diversion, a service which can be offered to eligible CalWORKs applicants. Diversion, in state law, is a lump sum payment which, if paid, would allow a family to avoid dependence on the CalWORKs program. Counties can receive incentive payments³¹ for families who are successfully diverted from the program. Families diverted from CalWORKs qualify for Food Stamps and Medi-Cal as otherwise eligible and also qualify for child care payments³².

County staff are also developing a broader concept of "diversion" than required by state law, to include community resource and employment referrals which can also help families reduce or avoid dependence on cash aid. Health Services has developed a community resources data base which can be accessed (via the Internet) by SSD staff to offer a wide range of community resource information.

Immunizations--New state law requires that SSDs verify immunization of all non-school-age children of CalWORKs participants. County SSD and Health Services staff are working together to inform and assist CalWORKs participants in complying with this requirement. Parents who fail to comply with this requirement face sanctions.

School Attendance--prior to CalWORKs legislation, only school enrollment, and only of 16-18-year-olds, was tracked. CalWORKs legislation requires that the attendance of all school age children be verified at application for CalWORKs. Moreover, continued attendance in school is to be made part of Welfare-to-Work Services Plans for WTW Services participants. Parents/WTW Services participants who fail to comply with this requirement face sanctions. County staff are developing a mechanism to comply with this requirement to verify school attendance.

Department of Child Support Services Collaboration With the implementation of CASES, the Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) has taken over payment of child support disregards, beginning February, 2004. DCSS staff has streamlined the interviewing process for absent and unmarried parents so that most interviews can take place over the phone. CalWORKs staff has direct access to DCSS data and staff as needed.

³¹See Section X (j) for more information

³²From Stage 3 funds or, if no funds are available, from Stage 2 funds. See Section VII, (g) AChild Care and Transportation Services", for more information.

(e) SUBSTANCE ABUSE³³ AND MENTAL HEALTH³⁴ TREATMENT SERVICES

Substance Abuse Services

Social Service and County Health Services Community Substance Abuse Services Department staff have begun collaboration on a model to provide alcohol and drug services to CalWORKs participants whose substance abuse creates a barrier to employment. Funds for these services will be administered in a manner that maximizes federal financial participation through Title XIX of the Social Security Act.

: The county certifies that its substance abuse treatment services will include at least the following: evaluation, case management, substance abuse treatment, and employment counseling, and the provision of community service jobs. An addendum to the County Plan will be forwarded when the county's model is developed.

The model will ensure that participants in job search activities may be directed at any time to an assessment if the county believes the participant's substance abuse precludes or limits satisfactory completion of this phase of the WTW Services program. CalWORKs case managers will refer participants as appropriate to the county alcohol and drug program or its agent for evaluation and determination of any treatment necessary for the participant's transition from welfare to work. Welfare-to-Work Plans shall be developed based on the results of this evaluation. Treatment may include assignment to a substance abuse program. CalWORKs participants may, with some exceptions, participate in such programs for no longer than six months without concurrent assignment to other work activities.

The model will include recommended training for county staff who are responsible for identification, referral and case management of CalWORKs participants to substance abuse evaluation and treatment.

Mental Health Services

Social Service and Health Services Mental Health Department staff have begun a collaborative process to develop and implement a model for mental health services for CalWORKs participants whose mental or emotional disabilities limit or impair their ability to make the transition from welfare to work. Wherever possible, the county shall ensure that the services provided qualify for federal reimbursement of the non-state share of Medi-Cal costs.

☒ The county certifies that it will provide at least the following services: assessment, case management, treatment and rehabilitation services, identification of substance abuse problems, and a process for identifying

³³State DSS outline suggests: "Briefly describe how the welfare department and the county alcohol and drug program will collaborate and utilize new funds available to ensure the effective delivery of substance abuse services. These funds should be used to maximize federal financial participation through Title XIX of the federal Social Security Act. If the county has determined who will provide substance abuse treatment services, please indicate the providers in the plan. If that decision has not been made, please provide CDSS an addendum to the county CalWORKs plan indicating the provider when determined. [Reference: WIC Section 11325.8]"

³⁴State DSS outline suggests: "Briefly describe how the welfare department and the county department of mental health will collaborate and utilize new funds available to provide effective mental health services. Counties should maximize federal financial participation to the extent possible in the provision of mental health services. [Reference: WIC Section 11325.7]"

individuals with severe mental disabilities. An addendum to the County Plan will be forwarded when the model is developed.

This model will be consistent with the county's welfare-to-work program and the county's consolidated mental health Medi-Cal services plan. In cases where a secondary diagnosis of substance abuse is made in a person referred for mental or emotional disorders, the welfare-to-work plan shall also address substance abuse treatment needs. There will be a process to identify those with severe metal disabilities that may qualify the participant for Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 12000).

Section VI

(f) MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES³⁵ AVAILABLE AFTER TIME LIMITS

This section has been deleted in accordance with SB 1104, implemented December 1, 2004.

Section VII

(g) CHILD CARE³⁶ AND TRANSPORTATION³⁷ SERVICES

Child Care

Overview:

A new child care system for qualifying low-income families will be implemented statewide on January 1, 1998. This system is designed to ensure seamless delivery of quality child care services. Funding is apportioned into three stages and administered by county Social Service Departments and/or other Alternative Payment Providers. Each county will establish a Local Child Care and Development Planning Council. Additional monies for child care have been allocated to Community College, state preschool and other child care providers/programs.

As of January 1, 1998, all current child care programs administered by the Contra Costa County Social Service Department will become part of the new child care services system. This means that the payments for the 2,350 children currently being made for the Child Care Disregard, Supplemental Child Care (SCC) Transitional Child Care (TCC), GAIN, NET and Cal Learn programs will be transitioned into the appropriate stage in the Child Care Block Grant. In addition, thousands more children may need support with child care services as their parents are enrolled in CalWORKs WTW Services by the end of 1998.

Transition:

Social Service staff are collaborating with many agencies, departments and groups throughout Contra Costa County to maximize the referral and usage of child care slots and funds for CalWORKs clients. These entities include the two other Alternative Payment Programs in the County (the Child Care Council which is also the county's Child Care Resource and Referral agency, and the PACE program), the three local Community Colleges (which received separate allocations for child care for CalWORKs participants), the county's Community Services/Head Start and State Preschool Programs, the Department of Education Latchkey Programs, the Child Care Center Directors Association, the Private Industry Councils, the Family Day Care Homes Association, and the Child Care Task Force.

Social Service and Child Care Council staff have developed a joint proposal to ensure that CalWORKs participants can swiftly access information about child care. This proposal provides that requests for/and referrals to licensed child care slots, when the participant does not already have a child care provider, be made by telephone. Clients will be assisted in accessing child care services at CalWORKs WTW Services Orientation or at any subsequent point that child care needs are identified. This proposal expands on a procedure currently in place that both agencies agree works well and will continue to provide quality child care services for CalWORKs participants.

³⁶State DSS outline suggests: "Please briefly describe how child care services will be provided to CalWORKs participants. This should include a description of how the county will provide child care for families transitioning from county funded providers to non-county funded providers of child care services. It should also indicate what criteria the county will use to determine, on a case-by-case basis, when parents who have primary responsibility for providing care to a child six months of age or younger, may be exempt from welfare-to-work participation. The exemption period must be at least twelve weeks and, at county discretion, can be increased to one year for the first child. The exemption period for subsequent children is twelve weeks, but may be increased to six months. Briefly describe the criteria the county will use to determine the period of time a parent or other relative will be exempt considering the availability of infant child care, local labor market conditions, and any other factors used by the county. Additionally, briefly describe how the county will ensure parents needing child care services can access the Resource and Referral Agency.:"

³⁷State DSS outline suggests: "Briefly describe how transportation services will be provided.[Reference: WIC Section 10531(g)]"

All Social Service child care payments will be made from the Department's automated system and staff are preparing for transition to the new system, in the appropriate stage, during January and February, 1998. It is intended that there be no disruption in child care payments during this transition period. Child care payments will be made direct to child care providers, including exempt providers, as of January 1, 1998.

Child Care Stages:

The three Stages of the Child Care Block Grant will be administered as follows:

- Stage 1 will be administered by SSD
- Stage 2 will be administered jointly by SSD, Child Care Council and PACE program as local APPs³⁸. CalWORKs participants who are working full time and no longer receiving cash aid will go to the community APPs and participants working and still receiving a grant, as well as participants in training/other work activities, will remain in the SSD's AP Program.
- Stage 3 will also be jointly administered among the county's three APPs. All three agencies intend to complete the term of their current Department of Education contracts.

It is the intent of the APPs that no participants will experience any disruption of child care services as they move among stages. The administering agency and the funding source for the child care payment may change, but the family will be able to retain the child care provider they have chosen. Participants who are receiving child care services from other sources will not have these arrangements interrupted. SSD staff will collaborate with other agencies for use of their child care slots whenever appropriate, e.g. referring participants to college child care slots when they are participating in a training program at the college and referring children to Head Start and State Preschool wrap-around slots when it is appropriate for the family.

For the benefit of participants, the Department intends to be in close communication with other agencies and providers in the child care community. As stated in the Department of Social Service's All County Letter 97-72³⁹, the Department can share client information with APPs, Resource and Referral programs and child care providers because they are considered an integral part of Stage 1 child care services. As such, confidentiality would not be violated as long as the communication with any of these entities is directly related to providing Stage 1 child care services. It further says that, in exchanging client information for purposes of administering seamless child care programs, these agencies are bound by the same confidentiality requirements.

Stage 1:

The Social Service Department will administer Stage 1 child care for the benefit of participants in the initial stage of CalWORKs activities. During this time, the Alternative Payment Program application and relevant paperwork will be completed⁴⁰ to ensure that participants can move seamlessly into the Stage 2 and Stage 3 AP Programs. Child Care Council staff have offered in-service training to teach SSD staff to assist participants in making optimum child care choices and accessing counseling and referrals for child care.

Participants receiving Stage 1 benefits will be immediately evaluated to determine how soon participants can move to the next Stage. Participants remain in Stage 1 child care until they are in a "stable" situation. A stable

³⁸See Attachment I for the Stage 2 Child Care Agreement

³⁹Social Service staff have drafted a confidentiality agreement that will allow participants to consent to sharing information, as appropriate to provide services, with selected agencies and organizations (including child care).

⁴⁰Note: State staff are responsible for developing a universal child care application form.

situation is usually one which includes a long-term work activity for which the caretaker has routine and fixed child care needs. Orientation and appraisal, job services and assessment are activities which are not considered stable since the child care needs are sporadic and short-term. Although there is a six-month time limit in Stage 1, this time limit can be extended if the participant's situation remains unstable or no funding and slots are available in Stage 2. Participants receiving subsidized child care from other sources will continue with those arrangements as long as appropriate.

Per AB 1542, "to the extent funds are available paid child care shall be available to a participant with a dependent child in the assistance unit who needs paid child care if the child is 11 or 12 years of age".

Stage 2:

If funding is less than need for child care, the following priorities have been set for Stage 2:

- Those who are transitioning off aid;
- Diversion participants (when there are no funds available in Stage 3);
- Families terminated from aid on January 1, 1998 because of new CalWORKs eligibility requirements.

Responsibility for administration of Stage 2 funds will be shared among the Social Service Department (as an AP Program), the Contra Costa Child Care Council and PACE Programs as the community AP Programs. The community APPs will provide child care services for current Transitional Child Care participants (these participants are working and no longer receiving cash aid). The SSD will provide child care services for all other participants in long-term work/work activities or training situations with fixed and routine child care needs, including:

- Current TCC clients who cannot be transferred to the other APPs because of insufficient funding;
- Current Supplemental Child Care and AFDC Child Care Disregard participants
- Current participants receiving child care payments from the "NET", GAIN and Cal Learn programs.

The community APPs will notify SSD staff when openings occur for new referrals and when participants no longer meet the criteria of working full time. The SSD and the community APPs will develop protocols for sharing participant information and paperwork.

Since participants have a two-year limit for Stage 2 benefits when transitioning off aid, the Department and community APPs will assist these participants in moving to waiting lists for other community subsidized slots, i.e. center-based slots, immediately upon the client's transition into Stage 2. There will be no displacement of CalWORKs or CalWORKs-eligible families in subsidized slots who self-enroll.

Stage 3:

This Stage will serve those working full time and no longer receiving cash aid, as well as former CalWORKs participants whose two-year time limit in Stage 2 has been reached and there are no slots available in the greater subsidized child care community. As they transition, space will be freed for other participants who must exit Stage 2 due to time limits. The following priorities have been set for Stage 3:

- Neglected or abused children who are recipients of child protective services or at risk of being neglected or abused;
- Lowest-income families;
- Other eligible families (including diversion families).

Responsibility for this Stage will again be shared among the SSD as an AP Program, and the two community AP Programs (Contra Costa Child Care Council and PACE APP). Each of these agencies will complete their current

subsidized child care contracts with California Department of Education. The SSD and community APPs will be working together, through the Local Planning Council, to develop a single, county-wide waiting list which will cover all stages and programs and facilitate the identification of open Stage 3 child care slots.

Implementation Planning Strategies:

Child care partners have been meeting to develop collaborative efforts and ensure coordination among all the appropriate agencies in the child care community. This outreach and collaboration will continue throughout the year as the new child care system becomes operational. Planning issues include:

- A single application form and other relevant child care forms which meet both federal and local requirements for use with all Stages are expected to be available by January 31, 1998.
- A method for open communications between the agencies regarding client information and child care services which does not breach confidentiality needs to be developed.
- A centralized waiting list for all programs to ensure smooth movement from Stage 2 to Stage 3, and ultimately to greater community subsidized child care slots.
- Procedures to fully utilize all child care services, including information about:
 - Pay differentials for children with special needs;
 - Pay differentials for evening and weekend care;
 - Options for care for non- and limited-English-speaking children.
- Procedures to fully utilize all funding available as appropriate for each CalWORKs participant. Other sources of child care services and funding include:
 - County Community Services/Child Development Head Start programs;
 - Community Colleges funding for children of CalWORKs students;
 - Local K-12 school-based programs;
 - Other sources as identified.
- Training to be developed for staff at all three county AP Programs to refer and transition participants smoothly among stages.

Exemption of parents of infants from Welfare-to-Work Services:

CalWORKs participants with newborn children are exempt from participation in WTW Services for 6 months for the first child and 12 weeks for subsequent children. These exemption times may be reduced to 12 weeks or increased to 12 months for the first child, and increased to 6 months for subsequent children, on a case-by-case basis and based on criteria developed by the county.

There are strong concerns about both the capacity of the current child care system and the adequacy of funding. With regard to these, Contra Costa intends to use the following minimum criteria, as well as individual participant arrangements, for exempting caretakers of newborns for a longer period than the 6 months/12 weeks in state law:

- Contra Costa Child Care Plan for 1996 shows 10,193 children between the ages of 0-3 needing care, with 4,701 slots available--an unmet need of 5,492 slots or a 54% deficit.
- There are approximately 1,400 children of future CalWORKs WTW Services participants aged 0-1; if all were required to participate when the child became 6 mos. /12 weeks old, this would increase the unmet need to approximately 6,900 slots. There are approximately 21,414 AFDC children aged 1 through 11; the child care report lists over 35,000 children aged 3-10 currently in need of care, with a shortage of 16,522 slots for children aged 5-10. Requiring mothers of children under 1 to participate in work activities

would exacerbate the unmet need in the local child care system and increase costs considerably, as care for these very young children is the most expensive.

- Under federal law, single parents of children under 6 cannot be sanctioned for nonparticipation in work activities if child care is unavailable.

The bulk of the funding need with regard to new enrollment of CalWORKs participants will occur in the latter part of calendar year 1998. Child care funding for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 98-9, which begins 7/98, has not yet been determined. County staff will research and report any potential funding shortfall to state Department of Social Services and Department of Education staff so that supplemental funds may be requested from the Legislature as necessary.

Transportation:

Contra Costa County will continue to provide reimbursement for transportation expenses for CalWORKs participants as a supportive service, including employment retention services.

There are five major transit authorities operating within the county's borders. These providers have formed a group called "Cooperating Area Transit Systems" (CATS) and have agreed to work closely with the Social Service Department to develop ways to better meet the transportation needs of CalWORKs participants.

In addition, a task force of the county's Children and Families Policy Forum (a body convened by the Board of Supervisors) is exploring ways to make transportation more available, affordable and accessible to CalWORKs participants⁴¹. This task force has begun a project to identify transportation issues from consumer, policymaker and provider perspectives with the intent of making short- and long-term recommendations to the Board for study and action.

The first element of this project will be to conduct a county transportation needs assessment. Local agency and non-profit partners are collaborating to use computer software to create a "map" representing the location of low-income participants, child care providers, expected places of employment and existing transit routes.

Other task force projects which have been suggested are:

- Consumer education;
- A "universal" transit pass;
- Possible financial incentives for employers who make transit passes available to their employees.

Other local efforts include the Service Integration Collaborative's local community transportation advocacy, which has involved AC Transit (North Richmond's primary transit provider) and local community members in a collaborative effort to expand services in that area. As a result, AC Transit launched the new 376 line on November 24, 1997. This line offers evening service in the North Richmond area with service to Richmond, Parchester Village, Hilltop Mall and the Pinole Vista area until 1:00-2:00am (former ending time of service was 7:00pm), seven days/week. This represents a significant benefit to the low-income residents of this community, who need such services to obtain and maintain employment as well as take advantage of training and education opportunities.

⁴¹See Attachment J.

(h) COMMUNITY SERVICE PLAN

The Employment and Human Services Department worked for several months with Community Based Organizations, Unions, Employers, and Employee groups to plan the Community Service portion of the CalWORKs Plan. Those involved established a process that is fair to CalWORKs participants, other employees, and employers. This process involves work experience in the public sector or with private, non-profit organizations. The Community Service Planning Task Force⁴² completed research and needs assessments in developing a plan for addressing Community Service in Contra Costa County.

The Community Service Plan is a comprehensive process that meets CalWORKs legislative requirements while enabling CalWORKs participants to learn basic job skills as they provide needed service to the communities in which they live. It will give CalWORKs participants an opportunity to make a real investment in their communities.

A wide variety of placements will be offered, breaking from the traditional clerical-type of position, offering hard skills training in addition to basic job skills. Particular attention was paid to the needs of existing employees at a job site to ensure that no displacement or other unfair labor tactics result from placement of a CalWORKs participant.

MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS

It is anticipated that community service participants will perform a myriad of duties for agencies that typically have a shortage of support staff. Community Service placements in Contra Costa will be in recycling programs, Head Start, public libraries, Salvation Army, St. Vincent de Paul, Battered Women's Alternatives, and county hospitals and clinics. Participants will function as clerical assistants, recycling personnel, teacher's aides, childcare providers, shuttle drivers, and in any other appropriate training position.

Ideally, Community Service Program administrators will develop more than just clerical positions for participants. Collaboration with business leaders will be important to develop training slots in non-profit organizations with opportunities for variety in selection, upward mobility and self-sufficiency for participants.

ASSIGNMENT TO COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES

Community Service Activities can be assigned at various times in the Welfare-to-Work continuum of services. Assignments are made primarily for training purposes, allowing participants an opportunity to gain real-world work experience. At all times, efforts will be made to match program participant's skills and abilities with appropriate community service providers, affording the greatest learning/skill building experience possible.

PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAM

⁴² See Attachment #1, Community Service Planning Task Force roster

Those individuals within the CalWORKs population who may need to participate in community service activities include:

Welfare to Work participants (including those in Self-Initiated Programs) who may be assigned to the community service program, if appropriate, and may concurrently participate in community service and other welfare to work activities, including training and educational activities, to fulfill the required number of work participation hours.

CalWORKs participants whose remote location prevents them from participating in other welfare-to-work activities will perform Community Service in their local community.

Welfare-to-Work participants may participate, on an individualized basis, in other instruction or training activities that are required for or relevant to, their specific community service activity, i.e. computer training classes needed to perform in his/her community service as clerical support staff. These individualized instruction or training activities also are countable towards meeting the community service participation requirement.

An individual's hours of participation in substance abuse treatment and/or mental health counseling and/or domestic abuse services may also be counted toward meeting the individual's work requirement, if the treatment/counseling services enables or supports the individual's participation in community service and is included in the individual's welfare-to-work plan.

Employment and Human Services staff will determine which Community Service slot would be most beneficial for each participant, and assign the client to it. Worksite agency staff will monitor the participation of each trainee, and provide a written evaluation of their progress on a monthly basis. In addition, worksite staff will provide the participant and the Employment and Human Services Department with a final evaluation of the trainee at the conclusion of the placement. Based in part on the evaluation, Employment and Human Services staff will then reassign the participant to a different placement, if unsubsidized employment has not been obtained.

AGENCIES INVOLVED IN ADMINISTERING AND MANAGING THE PROGRAM

Making Community Service activities available to CalWORKs welfare-to-work participants is a multi-faceted process requiring the collaboration of program administrators, community service site providers and community service participants. The program focus is to help participants develop the skills, habits and work experience they will need to secure unsubsidized employment, while promoting personal responsibility, independence and self-sufficiency. In order to meet these goals, each group involved in the process must assume certain roles and meet specific responsibilities. An outline of these roles and responsibilities follows:

- A. **Administering Agency-** Employment and Human Services Department
 1. Overall administrative responsibility for the Community Service Program.
 2. Selection and referral of community service participants
 3. Establish performance standards for work sites.
 4. Establish minimum program performance standards for participants.
 5. Create appropriate forms, reports, and training material to be used by work sites (e.g. time sheets; progress reports; exit evaluations, etc.)
 6. Develop a work-site handbook and other appropriate material, which will provide written guidelines and procedures for new work sites and participants.

7. Conduct group or individual training for new work sites.
8. Provide centralized support services.
9. Case management support.
10. Monitoring of progress toward established employment goals.
11. On-the-job coaching or corrective counseling as needed.
12. Job-placement services, including job club/search activities.
13. Referral of participants to appropriate support services, as in the case of serious mental illness. When appropriate, the Employment and Human Services Department will provide an on-site (co-located) staff person to assist the worksite with serious case management issues, such as drug or mental health problems.

B. Community Service Worksite Agencies:

1. Must qualify under IRS 501C3 rules for non-profits or be public agencies. Worksites will be conveniently located and accessible for participants.
2. Assume full responsibility for community service training at individual worksites.
3. Assume full responsibility for job supervision.
4. Provide on-site support to Community Service participants.

DURATION OF ASSIGNMENTS

All community service assignments will be performed in accordance with ACL 99-111 and will not be permanent. Community service activities will be temporary and transitional in nature; that is, they will be short-term, with specified ending dates. –Community service generally will be interspersed with other activities, such as job search. A six-month term may be necessary for some participants who have multiple barriers to employment, and need additional time to learn skills that will lead to self-sufficiency. The length of the assignment will depend upon the complexity of the job being learned. The approximate duration of jobs involving simple tasks will be three months.

The community service participant's attendance and progress in learning work skills will be monitored monthly. After three or six months, the participant's readiness for a more challenging assignment or unsubsidized employment will be assessed, and reassignment or job placement made.

The intention of Community Service activities is that it will lead to unsubsidized employment.

SUPPORTIVE EFFORTS

The following table outlines the range of services, a brief description of the service, and the partners available to provide the service:

KEY SUPPORT AREAS (and comments)	DESCRIPTION	SERVICE PARTNERS
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KEY SUPPORT AREAS (and comments)	DESCRIPTION	SERVICE PARTNERS
<u>Education and Job Training</u>	To include short-term skills development, basic education and job training. Minimum proficiency up to the 8 th grade level to the extent feasible; literacy skills	Colleges, co-op education programs; CBOs; One-Stops; America Reads; Project Second Chance
<u>Job Search</u>	Provide reinforcement and support for individuals as they search for unsubsidized employment. Provide access to placement services.	One-Stops; CBOs; Internet connections
<u>Chemical Dependency</u>	Detox; Residential Out-Patient; Recovery Support	Health Services Department and its multiple contractors; New Connections
<u>Mental Health</u>	Assess the need for long-term treatment, support and group therapy	Health Services Department (CMHS)/ Support Groups
<u>Domestic Violence</u>	Victimization is an issue that must be addressed in a comprehensive way. Support services should provide more than a safety net for those abused and their children; they should also educate all about self-empowering conditions.	Women Services Unit/Health Services; STAND! Against Domestic Violence (with support for housing)

A full range of supportive efforts/services, based upon the individual's Welfare-to-Work plan, will be available to participants.

Hours spent in training or education post time-limits will count toward the community service hours if the training or education is required for, or directly related to, the community service assignment.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

In an effort to assist the participant in removing all barriers to self-sufficiency, Contra Costa will provide assistance with childcare, transportation, and ancillary expenses to those performing community service hours and meeting work participation requirements. The County will also provide personal counseling, if needed to eliminate employment barriers. These activities will only count toward the community service requirement post time limits when the service enables the individual to participate in community service, and it is included in the individual's Welfare-to-Work plan.

Key Support Areas	Description	Service Partners
<p><u>Child Care-</u></p> <p><i>It is important to note that a dearth of resources exists. This is especially true for particular areas of the county such as North Richmond, which has no child care facilities.</i></p>	<p>Day care slots; help with transportation; more after school programs; encourage entrepreneurship; train more providers to offer care in their homes; train mothers on what to look for in a provider; continue and enlarge programs that train people to work in day care centers</p>	<p>K-12 in school/after school programs; So. Harbor MLK after school program; CBO (i.e. YMCA, Girls and Boys Clubs); child care council; health community; faith community; colleges; in-house care; family cooperatives managed by parents w/ educational links; employer arranged in-house child care; Village Resource Center, Brentwood</p>
<p><u>Transportation-</u></p> <p><i>This is one of our largest obstacles in the county. Yet, most of our recipients must somehow get to community service or work sites and childcare locales via some type of public transportation. In some areas there is one bus line running once per hour daily, which does not allow one to work non-traditional hours.</i></p>	<p>Assistance is needed in putting together sound travel programs to ensure participant's ability to get to strategic locales/routes.</p> <p>Transportation Programs -- To the extent funding is available, special transportation programs are offered to participants when public transportation isn't available or to address long-term transportation needs. These programs include</p> <p>'Rides to Success - This program provides door-to-door bus service to transport participants from their homes to Welfare to Work activities.</p> <p>'Children's Transportation Project - This program provides transportation for children to and from school when public transportation isn't available or safe for children to ride alone.</p> <p>'KEYS Auto Loan Program - This program is available by application and with approval by the loan committee to</p>	<p>Members of the Transportation Alliance, including transit providers, TDM managers, kiosks, Health Services, Internet-based services, and other providers as needed.</p>

Key Support Areas	Description	Service Partners
	individuals who have been employed for at least three months and need an automobile for work.	
<u>Ancillary Services</u> <u>and</u> <u>Personal Counseling</u>	To support Community Service activities and remove barriers to employment	Health Services Department and other appropriate providers, based on need

Section IX

(i) WORKING WITH VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE⁴³

Social Service planner staff have begun meeting with agencies such as the Health Services Department and local domestic violence prevention program representatives to develop interim protocols and standards for determining good cause to waive program requirements for victims of domestic violence. County Health Services Community Wellness and Prevention Program staff have published a set of recommendations⁴⁴ for domestic violence and welfare reform which will be considered in developing interim standards and protocols.

Immediately upon determining the interim protocols and standards, Social Service Staff Development staff shall develop an in-house training curriculum or purchase such a curriculum and tailor it to the specific guidelines locally developed, for delivery to staff who work with CalWORKs applicants or participants who are past or present victims of domestic violence. This curriculum will emphasize:

- Techniques for early identification of domestic violence issues;
- Information about community domestic violence services resources;
- Referrals to appropriate services;
- Criteria for determining good cause/waiving program requirements;
- Structuring a welfare-to-work plan to utilize domestic violence services as part of the employability plan;
- Case management for families with domestic violence victims.

Contra Costa County has domestic abuse protocols in place within the Welfare to Work Services program. The Department has contracted with STAND! Against Domestic Violence, a private, non-profit organization

⁴³State DSS outline suggests: "Briefly describe how the county will provide training for those county workers who will be responsible for working with CalWORKs recipients who are victims of domestic violence. [Reference: WIC Section 10531(i)]"

⁴⁴See attachment K.

dedicated to reducing and treating domestic violence in the community, to provide counseling and other services to CalWORKs participants.

The local activities shall be designed to coordinate with the adoption of statewide standards and protocols developed by the State DSS and the Task Force on Domestic Violence.

Section X

(j) PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES TO MEET LOCALLY ESTABLISHED OBJECTIVES⁴⁵

The county has adopted the Social Service IM/GAIN Redesign outcomes⁴⁶, with some modifications as appropriate, as the CalWORKs outcomes. These outcomes and suggested measures are as follows:

Outcome	Data/Measure	Data Collection Tools
Increased exits due to employment	Number of cases discontinued for excess income/earnings	CDS ⁴⁷ MFE
Successful diversion from CalWORKs	Number of diversion cases	CDS MFE
Increased number of cases with decreased grants due to earnings	Number of cases with grants decreased due to earnings	CDS MFE
Increased number of job placements	Number of persons placed in jobs	CDS MFE GIS ⁴⁸
Increased number of CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work Services participants	Number enrolled in WTW Services	CDS MFE GIS
TANF work participation rates requirements met/exceeded	Number employed (convert to %); Number participating in allowable federal work activities; Number of hours participating	CDS MFE GIS
Decreased recidivism	Number of participants who retain employment	CDS MFE GIS
Increased number of child support orders/ amounts of collections	Number of child support orders/amounts of collections	MFE
Movement toward self-sufficiency	Average hourly wages of participants who obtain employment; number of hours worked; number of hours in training and education over hours worked; number of working participants with health coverage	CDS MFE GIS

⁴⁵ State DSS outline suggests: "Please indicate whether there were any local program outcome objectives identified during the CalWORKs plan development process and how the county proposes to track those outcomes. If the county develops alternative outcomes for the CalWORKs program during future collaborative efforts, please submit information on those measures as an addendum to the CalWORKs plan. [Reference: WIC Section 10542]"

⁴⁶ See Attachment A

⁴⁷ CDS, the Case Data System, is the county's automated system for cash aid services. MFE is the Social Service Department's Master File Extract Project, a process of extracting data from existing databases for the purpose of better analyzing outcomes.

⁴⁸ GIS, the GAIN Information System, is the county's automated system for employment services

Outcome	Data/Measure	Data Collection Tools
Decreased cost per placement	Cost per placement	GIS

Redesign outcomes were designed to measure federal welfare reform outcomes and have been modified to measure new outcomes determined by recent state law changes. CalWORKs legislation allows for counties to accrue incentive payments for certain positive program outcomes. Specifically, counties are allowed to retain 75% of the grant payment savings derived from three measures:

- Successful diversion from CalWORKs⁴⁹ cash aid;
- Exits due to employment;
- Decreased grants due to increased earnings.

Counties can keep these incentive payments from year to year and must reinvest these payments in the CalWORKs program.

The county also intends to gather input and measure progress through the use of surveys of staff, CalWORKs program participants and employers.

In addition, local suggestions have been offered for measuring outcomes due to welfare reform implementation, including tracking the rate of homelessness and other indicators of family stability over time. Suggestions will be evaluated for priority, cost-effectiveness and feasibility given the constraints of existing data collection tools.

⁴⁹ Defined as: the family avoids CalWORKs cash aid for a period of time equaling the amount of the diversion payment, divided by need standard for the family, plus six months.

(k) PUBLIC INPUT⁵⁰ TO THE COUNTY PLAN

Public Input

The Social Service Department, as the lead agency for development and compilation of the County CalWORKs Plan, began the public comment process by publishing Welfare Reform Bulletin 97-04 to advise the public of the County Plan requirements and the need for public participation in the planning process. This Bulletin was mailed to a community mailing list of over 400 individuals, agencies and organizations and distributed in Social Service offices countywide. The SSD Director submitted a proposal for the Plan Development process to the Family and Human Services Committee of the county Board of Supervisors on September 8, 1997; this proposal was endorsed by the full Board on September 16.

Included in this proposal was the plan to hold public forums to gather input on the Plan. Three regional Forums were held on October 6, 8 and 9, with notification to the community mailing list, posting in local SSD offices and press releases. Public input ranged from short- to longer-term issues and has been evaluated for incorporation into the Plan. Here are just two of the many good suggestions received as a result of these forums:

- A good use of the diversion program would be to authorize payment of an eligible applicant's car registration or insurance, to allow him/her to continue working. (This input was forwarded to county staff to be included as an example of possible uses of diversion.)
- There should be specific outreach to get the input of AFDC program participants. (To solicit input directly from future CalWORKs participants, a survey was mailed early in November asking about specific needs and preferences for CalWORKs services. This input will be evaluated and incorporated into the ongoing planning for service delivery as it is received.)

Social Service staff have met with a variety of individuals, groups and organizations to solicit input during the Plan development process, including:

- Workforce Development Advisory Panel⁵¹
- City of Richmond/Contra Costa Private Industry Councils
- Employment Development Department Managers
- Regional County Welfare Reform Coordinators
- Bay Area Social Services Consortium
- Bay Area Partnership/Northern Ca. Council of Communities
- Cowell and Zellerbach Family Fund Foundations

⁵⁰State DSS outline suggests: "Briefly describe the means the county used to obtain broad public input in the development of the CalWORKs plan. [Reference: WIC Section 10531(k)]"

⁵¹See Attachment L for Roster. This group includes leaders of community and employment development organizations.

- SSD County Plan Advisory Group⁵²
- County Welfare Directors Assn. Technical Review Teams, State/County Workgroups and standing Committees
- State and Federal Legislative staff
- Contra Costa, Los Medanos, Diablo Valley and Community College Chancellor's Office
- County Adult Education and ROC/P representatives
- AC Transit, WestCAT, BART, County Connection, Tri-Delta Transit, RIDES and Community-Based Organization transit project staff
- Child Care Task Force, Child Care Organizations and Providers meeting
- East Bay Refugee Forum
- Interagency meeting with County Health Services, Probation, District Attorney, Community Services, Vocational Rehabilitation
- STAND! Against Domestic Violence
- County Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
- Volunteer Services
- Children's Policy Forum
- Public Health Advisory Group
- Community forums including North Richmond community leaders, Interfaith Alliance, League of Women Voters
- Food and Nutrition Policy Consortium

Two examples of input received at a recent Interfaith Alliance forum are:

- The county's economic development efforts should include working to raise the wages and benefits of entry-level jobs so that low-income families can leave the welfare system through entry-level employment.
- The faith community could play a significant role in welfare reform efforts by "adopt-a-family" programs, mentoring, providing space for employment service "job clubs" and child care, and helping formulate the county's Community Service Plan.

⁵² A group of over 50 SSD staff from all levels and functions affected by CalWORKs, including representatives from local bargaining units.

- Representatives of local interfaith alliances and programs and non-profit agencies forwarded a set of points regarding welfare reform and met with Social Service Department staff on November 25, 1997 to give presentations about their specific concerns⁵³. Points made at this meeting include:
- Lists of training programs should be made available;
- Success rate of training and job placements should be tracked;
- Microenterprise efforts should be encouraged and funded;
- Exemption criteria for caretakers of infants should speak to the lack of slots and expense of care, and bonding needs between caretaker and child should be a criteria;
- Legislative advocacy should include expansion of the exemption for caretakers of young children;
- Funding for child care should include quality of care;
- It should be explicitly stated that, in federal law, single caretakers of children under the age of 6 cannot be sanctioned for nonparticipation in work activities if child care is unavailable;
- Specific estimates of funding shortages for child care for state fiscal year 98-99 should be developed;
- Additional funding for retention of North Richmond 376 line, expansion of service and other transportation activities should be obtained;
- Funding should be provided for purchase of autos and/or payment of auto registration and auto insurance from CalWORKs diversion or other sources;
- Legislative advocacy should include exemption from auto license fees, and low-cost insurance, for CalWORKs participants;
- Public agency and community group representatives should collaborate to advocate for legislative changes that benefit CalWORKs participants;
- The public and elected officials need to be educated about the issues relating to welfare reform and poverty;
- Housing concerns, such as high rents, lack of affordable housing, lack of shelters for the homeless and federal housing rules that conflict with CalWORKs requirements should be addressed;
- The SSD should negotiate with utility companies to ensure that CalWORKs participants can access payment plans;
- Food issues, such as wider availability of food bank stock, more and appropriate food, need for cooking/nutrition education and confidentiality barriers that result in abuse, should be addressed;
- Access to health services, mental health and substance abuse services should be increased and these services should be culturally and linguistically appropriate;
- Lack of automation to determine eligibility and track participation and exemptions should be addressed;
- Specific funding for programs and services provided by faith-based and non-profit organizations should be provided.

Many of the participants at this meeting stated that they had been unable to access a copy of the CalWORKs Plan draft at local libraries during the comment period. Another meeting was set for December 12, 1997 to ensure that their concerns were reflected in the Plan and to provide a list of programs and services offered in the county by faith and non-profit organizations represented by this group.

Other written public input included⁵⁴:

⁵³See Attachment L

⁵⁴See Attachment L

- A response to the County CalWORKs Plan, received on December 1, 1997, prepared jointly by the Contra Costa Legal Aid Foundation and the Legal Aid Society of San Francisco's Employment Law Center;
- A critique of the CalWORKs County Plan Draft from Gwen Watson for the League of Women Voters; and
- Comments on the county's CalWORKs draft from Rob Draim of Shelter, Inc.

Public comment from the presentation of the final Plan draft at the Family and Human Services Subcommittee of the county Board of Supervisors on December 8, 1997 are also included in Attachment L. Individual responses will be prepared for written comment. As a result of the comment, some changes, corrections and additions in Plan language were made. Much of the comment concerns operational aspects that will be considered in the months ahead as implementation strategies are more fully developed.

It is emphasized that the planning process for welfare reform will continue beyond what is set forth in the County Plan and that the many collaborators who seek ongoing involvement in the county's welfare reform efforts are welcome to participate.

Public Information

Social Service staff have conducted and continue to roll out a number of public information efforts, including:

- Welfare Reform Bulletins and an SSD Briefing Folder
- Targeted mailers to CalWORKs participants--the first three are planned for information about grant level changes, new welfare fraud penalties and immunization requirements.
- Press releases and interviews with local media to inform about welfare reform issues and initiatives
- Grand Jury, Child Welfare Subcommittee briefing
- "What will Welfare Reform Mean to You and Your Family?" brochure
- Contra Costa Television program on the Children's Report Card
- Toll-free Welfare Reform Information and Question Line
- Social Service Rapid Response Team Speaker's Bureau (trained to make community presentations)

Section XII

(I) SOURCE AND EXPENDITURES OF FUNDS⁵⁵

State and federal law provide that a variety of local, state and federal agencies are responsible for funding programs and services for families participating in the CalWORKs program⁵⁶. The primary source of funding for the CalWORKs program is the Social Service Department allocation, made up of a combination of TANF block grant, state and county funds. This funding is primarily dedicated to cash aid payments; additional funding is allocated for administrative costs and Welfare-to-Work Services, including supportive services.

Other county departments and county, state and federal agencies have also been allocated funding which is dedicated to programs and services for CalWORKs participants. These additional sources of funding include:

- Community Colleges allocations for programs and supportive services (notably child care);
- Adult Education and Regional Occupational Center/Program allocations;
- Federal Welfare-to-Work formula grants to states, distributed to local Private Industry Councils;
- Child care funds administered by the state Department of Education, some of which are allocated directly to county Social Service Departments and others of which are allocated to local Alternative Payment Providers (the county SSD, the Child Care Council and the PACE program).

Many other sources of funding are dedicated to programs and supportive services that are not specifically earmarked for CalWORKs participants, but which may be utilized for CalWORKs families who meet needs-based or other criteria. These sources include, but are not limited to:

- Employment Development Department job services;
- Child care funding other than the Stage 1, 2 and 3 allocations;
- Housing Authority housing and employment programs;
- Community- and faith-based employment, training and supportive services;
- Public/non-profit employment, training and/or supportive services programs;
- JTPA-funded training and job-readiness programs.

As the CalWORKs program becomes operational, it is expected that funding estimates will become more specific and that better information regarding ongoing funding needs will be developed.

⁵⁵State DSS outline suggests: "Provide a budget specifying your county's estimated expenditures and source of funds for the CalWORKs program on the forms provided. Your budget should meet the requirement of WIC Section 15204.4 which specifies that each county shall expend an amount for these programs (administration and services) that, when combined with funds expended for the administration of food stamps, equals or exceeds the amount spent by that county for corresponding activities during the 1996/97 fiscal year. [Reference: WIC Section 10531(l)]"

⁵⁶See Attachment M for documentation of SSD, Community Colleges, Ad.Ed./ROC/P and federal Welfare-to-Work allocations.

(m) ASSISTING FAMILIES TRANSITIONING OFF AID⁵⁷

Employment

A variety of initiatives begun in the past year, and in various stages of implementation, will assist CalWORKs participants who leave aid due to employment. Transitional benefits include child care and Transitional Medical. Other services in place or planned include case management and supportive services for employment retention and the development of services in several agencies to assist the general public, including low-income CalWORKs or former CalWORKs participants, to increase their education, job skills and employment potential.

As part of last year's Social Service Income Maintenance/GAIN Bureau Redesign, work stations have been established in the lobbies of the 4 major AFDC benefits offices (Antioch, Martinez, Richmond and Hercules) and staffed with individuals who help participants access a variety of community and employment-related resources.

The Antioch office has established a separate Resource Room with computer and phone banks for job-seekers and those needing to access employment-related resources. This Resource Room is open to the general public. The Community Resources Task Force has researched and developed a proposal to allow access to community and employment-related resource information via kiosks in SSD lobbies.

Other community initiative such as the One Stop Career Centers will provide ongoing employment and training-related support, as well as access to information about supportive services and lifelong learning opportunities.

Time Limits

At this time, planning for assistance to families transitioning off CalWORKs due to time limits is in the very initial stages. The number of persons affected and impact of time limits is not well-defined. County staff will be closely following research on programs in states which obtained federal waivers to establish time limits prior to the enactment of federal welfare reform.

At this time it is anticipated that families exiting the CalWORKs program due to time limits will be offered:

- safety net benefits for children;
- continued participation in programs such as Medi-Cal and Food Stamps as determined eligible;
- referrals to community resources;
- employment-related resources such as Private Industry Council/ Adult Education, ROP, community college and other training programs;
- referrals to public health and mental health services;
- other referrals as appropriate.

⁵⁷ State DSS outline suggests: "Please describe how the county will work with families transitioning off aid. The description should include (1) assistance for those individuals who transition off aid due to time limits, and (2) those who leave aid due to employment. [Reference: WIC Section 10531(m)]"

(n) JOB CREATION⁵⁸

In the course of the last two years, collaborative efforts have begun to build a system of workforce development and economic development in Contra Costa County. In August, 1996, the leaders of business, public and private sector organizations held a forum at which they declared their commitment to a workforce preparation and economic development collaborative. In February, 1997, those leaders formed the Workforce Development Advisory Panel, which brings together the leaders of local employment and training, economic development, social service, labor, education and the employer community. This group is engaged in developing short- and long-term strategies that benefit all Contra Costa citizens, regardless of income level, by designing programs and services that are aimed to produce an experienced, educated and trained labor force for a vibrant, growing and multi-occupation business community.

Extensive analysis of the available labor market information is seen as one of many tools to achieving the goals of both welfare reform and of overall economic and workforce development in the county. Application for recently-enacted Job Creation Investment Fund is being pursued. Other possible funding sources for economic and workforce development includes the Regional Workforce Preparation and Economic Development Act, EDD Job Creation funding and federal JTPA Welfare-to-Work competitive grants.

Social Service staff have recently been recruited to join local Chambers of Commerce as just one of many efforts to establish SSD linkages with the employer community. The regional alliances such as the one supporting the EastBay Works project are expected to produce an expansion of capacity to link with employers and draw the attention of potential employers to our region.

In addition to efforts to attract new business to the area, continued job creation efforts will focus on expansion of existing local job opportunities. One Stop Career Center planning, as well as planning for the Instructional and Job Training Plan due in March, 1998, will include efforts to provide opportunities for those already in the work force to better their skills, resulting in movement up the job ladder and the creation of vacancies in existing entry-level jobs.

⁵⁸State DSS outline suggests: "Please describe the efforts that have been undertaken, or that the county plans to pursue, relating to the job creation plan described in Chapter 1.12 (commencing with Section 15365.50) of Part 6.7 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code."

Section XV

(o) OTHER ELEMENTS⁵⁹

AB 1542 Demonstration Projects have either been completed or were not funded.

Section XVI

⁵⁹ State DSS outline suggests: "Pilot projects: Please include a description of any pilot projects that the county may wish to pursue and submit a separate proposal for, as part of its CalWORKs Program. Should the county later determine an interest in a pilot proposal, this information could be submitted as an addendum to the County Plan."

(p) COMPLIANCE WITH REQUIREMENTS OF CalWORKs⁶⁰

Two-parent families are required by state law to participate in work activities for 35 hours per week in the county's Welfare-to-Work Services program. This requirement may be shared by the parents as long as one parent meets the federal minimum participation requirement of 20 hours per week. The county has the option to set the participation rate for single-parent families from 20-32 hours per week as long as state law requirements of (20 hours--1/98-6/98; 26 hours--7/98-6/99; 32 hours--7/99 and continuing) are met.

Contra Costa County will require CalWORKs participants in WTW Services to participate 26 hours per week in single-parent families, and 35 hours per week in two-parent families. This requirement begins when the Welfare-to-Work Services program begins (target date: 3/98 for new CalWORKs applicants, 4/98-12/98 for CalWORKs participants) and affects the individual at the time that individual enrolls in the WTW Services program.

26 hours per week was chosen for several reasons:

- Minimize disruption in the start-up phase of the program. The program is scheduled to start in March and state law requires a change to at least 26 hours in July.
- Ensure a quality experience in the initial job services phase. This phase, which includes "job club" job readiness services, is considered critical to a successful entry into the labor force. "Job club" as it currently exists is 28 hours/week and, if minimum participation were reduced below 26 hours, would not offer the quality of service that the current program provides.
- This level of participation was determined to fit participant and administrative needs in the initial stage of the program. Any individual wishing to participate more than 26 hours is free to do so.
- State law increases the single-parent requirement to 32 hours per week in 7/99. By that time all existing participants will be enrolled in WTW Services and capacity to increase hours of participation will have increased as well.

Some single parents will be required to participate in WTW activities 32 hours per week, specifically those in Self-Initiated Programs. Those participants, however, may count classroom, lab and internship time in the 32 hour requirement, as well as participate in work-study.

Effective December 1, 2004, all new CalWORKs Welfare to Work participants will be required to engage in at least 20-hours of core activities related directly to employment. In ongoing cases, participant plans will be reviewed to ensure that each participant meets the 20-hours of core activities required under SB 1104 by March 1, 2005. Non-core hours required to support a core-hour activity or promote self-sufficiency will be reviewed based on SB 1104 approval criteria. If appropriate, non-core hours will be accepted on an individual basis.

⁶⁰State DSS outline suggests: "Under CalWORKs counties are required to enroll single parent families in welfare-to-work activities for a minimum of 20 hours per week beginning January 1, 1998, 26 hours per week beginning July 1, 1998, and 32 hours per week beginning July 1, 1999. [Reference: WIC Section 11322.8(a)] Prior to July 1, 1999, counties have the option to require adults in single-parent assistance units to participate up to 32 hours per week. Does your county intend to exercise that option? [Reference: WIC Section 11322.8(a)]"

Section XVII

(q) INTERACTION WITH AMERICAN INDIAN TRIBES⁶¹

Contra Costa County has a coordinator in place who will work with Tribal TANF and develop appropriate Memoranda of Understanding.

⁶¹State DSS outline suggests: "Please describe the discussions that have occurred with respect to administration for the federally recognized American Indian Tribes located within your county. This should include whether the county will administer the program, whether the tribes will administer their own approved tribal TANF program, or whether there will be joint county/tribal administration. [Reference: WIC Section 10553.2]"

Section XVIII

CERTIFICATION

THIS PLAN HAS BEEN DEVELOPED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE APPROPRIATE FEDERAL, STATE AND COUNTY LAWS AND REGULATIONS. THE TERMS OF THIS PLAN, INCLUDING ALL CERTIFICATIONS WITHIN THIS PLAN, AND ALL APPLICABLE LAWS AND REGULATIONS WILL BE FOLLOWED DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION AND EXECUTION OF THIS PLAN.

John Cullen, Director
Social Service Department

Gayle Ulkema, Chair
Board of Supervisors

Section XIX

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AdEd	Adult Education
ABE	Adult Basic Education
AFDC	Aid to Families with Dependent Children
APP	Alternative Payment Providers (Child Care)
DAFS	District Attorney Family Support Division
EDD	Employment Development Department
ESL	English as a Second Language
FS	Food Stamps
GA	General Assistance (County-funded cash aid/services)
GAIN	Greater Avenues for Independence (SSD Employment Services program)
GED	General Equivalency Degree
HSD	High School Diploma
IM	Income Maintenance (Social Service AFDC, FS, GA, MC programs)
JTPA	Job Training Partnership Act
MC	Medi-Cal
OJT	On-the-Job Training
PIC	Private Industry Council (JTPA Service Delivery Area)
ROC/P	Regional Occupational Center/Program
SDA	Service Delivery Area (for JTPA funds)
SSD	Social Service Department
WIC	Welfare and Institutions Code

WTW

Welfare-to-Work

Section XX

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS:

- A “Focusing on Employment”, IM/GAIN Redesign Plan (synopsis)
- B Community Colleges CalWORKs service delivery Plans and current degree/certificate programs
- C List of Adult Education and Regional Occupational Center/Program services
- D Contra Costa County Occupational Training Matrix
- E List of training and employment services offered through Richmond Works, a subsidiary of the City of Richmond Private Industry Council
- F Surveys and Analyses of Local Training and Education Levels
- G Labor Market Information
- H Social Service Department CalWORKs Service Delivery Model
- I Stage 2 Child Care Agreement
- J Transit Activities Report
- K Domestic Violence and Welfare Reform
- L Faith-Based Organizations Representatives Welfare Reform Points and November 25, 1997 Meeting Agenda
- M Source and Expenditures of Funds Documentation for Social Service Department, Community Colleges, Adult Education and Regional Occupational Center/Program and Federal Welfare-to-Work Funds to Local Private Industry Councils
- N Workforce Development Advisory Panel Roster
- O Non-Custodial Parent Employment and Training Demonstration Proposal

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Section XXI

Certification of Local System Partners

THIS PLAN HAS BEEN COMPILED BASED ON THE INPUT AND PARTICIPATION OF, AMONG OTHERS, THE UNDERSIGNED PARTNERS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A COMPREHENSIVE, INTEGRATED SYSTEM OF WORKFORCE PREPARATION WHICH ALSO SERVES CalWORKs PARTICIPANTS IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY. THIS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM WILL BE ENHANCED BY THE WELFARE REFORM STRATEGIES OUTLINED IN THIS PLAN.

Chuck Spence, Chancellor
Community College District

Joe Ovick, Superintendent
Office of Education

Katherine Ertz-Berger, Executive Director
Child Care Council

Guiliana M. Halasz, Director
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